PRO/027/008

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
RICHFIELD DISTRICT OFFICE
150 EAST 900 NORTH
RICHFIELD, UTAH 84701

IN REPLY
REFER TO:
3530
(U-052)
U-37866 thru
U-37868 and
U-37889

CERTIFIED MAIL #P 243060679

August 6, 1986

Mr. M. C. Godbe, III
1012 Newhouse Building
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

Re: Potassium Prospecting Permit Nos. U-37866, U-37867, U-37868, U-37889

Dear Mr. Godbe:

On March 6, 1986, an exploration plan covering the above referenced potassium prospecting permits was filed with this office. An Environmental Assessment was prepared based on this proposal and it has been determined that no significant adverse environmental impacts would occur from the proposed action. A copy of the Environmental Assessment is enclosed for your information.

At the present time, each of the subject prospecting permits are covered by $1,000 prospecting permit bonds filed with the Bureau of Land Management. The State of Utah has determined that a $65,000 reclamation bond covering proposed activities on both Federal and State lands shall be required prior to dike construction. It has been agreed upon that this bond may be filed with the State of Utah with the understanding that the Bureau of Land Management must concur with any reclamation bond relinquishment for this project.

Approval of your exploration plan is granted conditioned upon the requirement that the required bond is filed with and accepted by the State of Utah. A copy of this bond must be filed with this office prior to the start of any work, other than the construction of the proposed access road across Federal land in T. 23 S., R. 11 W., Sec's 6 and 7. All operations shall be conducted in accordance with the stipulations attached to the subject extended potassium prospecting permits (copy attached) and the following conditions of approval:

1. The lessee or operator shall take steps necessary to protect the integrity of existing stock watering ponds around the perimeter of Sevier Dry Lake.

2. The lessee or operator shall ensure that all personnel are aware of livestock grazing in the area and shall place signs along the access road warning drivers of the presence of livestock.

3. Vehicle travel shall be confined to existing roads and these new roads proposed in the exploration plan. Roads shall be constructed to the minimum width necessary while still providing for safety of equipment and personnel. Water bars shall be placed where necessary to provide adequate drainage of water from roads. All drainage crossings along the access roads shall be constructed in such a manner in which natural drainage is unobstructed.

4. Approved sanitation facilities shall be provided for employees working at the site.

Sincerely,

Donald L. Pendleton
District Manager

Enclosures:
Environmental Assessment
Stipulations-Extended Prospecting Permits

cc: WSRA
U-921
Dave Wham ✓

RECORD OF DECISION

FOR

Sevier Dry Lake Potassium Mining Plan

DECISION: After considering the anticipated impacts of the proposed mining plan as described in EA No. UT-050-86-87. I have decided to approve the plan as submitted with the following stipulations:

(1) Protect the present livestock reservoirs near the water line from being polluted with salty lake water; (2) Council all drivers of the livestock grazing in the area and place signs warning drivers of the presence of livestock; (3) Use dust control measures when conditions require such as determined by BLM; (4) Keep road width to a minimum needed for safety. Provide for natural water flow along road with water bars being placed where necessary to control erosion. Revegetate disturbed areas where practical; (5) Provide sanitation facilities for workers and contain and dispose of trash in such a way as to eliminate unsightly or unhealthy conditions.

RATIONALE: There appears to be good evidence that an economical mineral extraction operation could be developed. The present operator is operating under present laws and regulations and in conformance with present planning documents. There does not appear to be any significant environmental adverse impact and no controversial issue and the public interest is low. Therefore, no Environmental Impact Statement is needed for this action.

Mark E. Bailey
Area Manager

7-29-86
Date

EA No. UT-050-86-87

Sevier Dry Lake Potassium Mining Plan

Prepared By: Gerald R Muhlestein

Participating Staff:

Tom Terry, Realty Specialist
Camille Fullmer, Range Conservationist
John Augsburger, Wildlife Biologist
Craig Harmon, Archaeologist
Don Burt, Range Conservationist

Recommended By:

Thomas D Terry — Area EA Coordinator — 7-29-86 — Date

Approved By:

Mark E Bailey — Area Manager — 7-29-86 — Date

INTRODUCTION

Mr. M. C. Godbe, III and Associates have been actively engaged in exploration activities on the Sevier Lake area for the past several years. Potassium prospecting permits were obtained to cover the exploration work, which consisted of shallow 2 to 4 inch bore holes covering most of the lake surface, mapping and some small evaporation pond construction. In order to continue the processing of the lake brines, Mr. Godby has proposed additional activities which are described below.

A. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION

Mr. M.C. Godbe, III submitted a mining plan dated March 3, 1986. The plan provided for an earthen dike to be constructed across the lake at the narrowest point or at the needlepoint. The dike would be from 4 to 5 miles long, 15 foot crest width and average height of 8 feet. The fill would be taken from State of Utah land on the east end of the dike and would be hauled by truck to the dike. Riprap material would be placed on the north facing dike slope. The riprap material is expected to be obtained from screening out the large rocks from the dike fill.

The dike is needed to control the lake water on the southern portion to the optium depth for evaporation. Several wooden wiers would be placed in the dike to allow water movement as desired.

The necessary construction equipment would be moved in at the beginning of the project and would remain at the site until the dike completion. There would be vehicle travel to the site each day with workmen staying each night at the nearest town which would probably be Milford, Utah.

Access to the site would be along existing roads except for the last two miles which would be new construction. The new constructed road would be on fairly flat terrain and would not require any significant cuts or fills. The last mile of road is on State of Utah land. Construction is proposed for the fall and winter of 1986 and could run into the early part of 1987. The construction crew is expected to be 4 to 10 people. A day camp and maintenance area would be set up somehwere on the State land near the barrow pit.

B. DESCRIPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AFFECTED

The Sevier Lake is located about 35 miles southwest of Delta, Utah. U.S. Highway 50&6 passes by the north end of the lake. The entire north end of the lake is visible from highway 50&6. The proposed dike is between 12 to 15 miles south of the highway. Presently the lake is covered with 2 to 5 feet of water and has been covered for the past three years. However, prior to this period the lake has been dry most of the year every year. There is a possibility that the lake will dry up again and return to a dry lake bed like it has been before. Due to the fact that the lake is dry most of the time it is not considered a significant wildlife habitat. Therefore the wildlife environment is not affected to any extent.

The only right-of-way near the proposed action is a AT&T reflector Right-of-way (R/W) on the north end of the lake - No. U 18446. About 12 wooden towers had been constructed several years ago, but were all destroyed in the spring of 1984 by ice and wind.

There are several livestock reservoirs around the lake that catch rainwater before it reaches the lake. They are Cricket #1, Cricket #2, Needle Point Hardpan, Madsen, Miller and Mud Flat.

Livestock operators graze sheep on all sides of the lake and cattle on the north end only.

The access road from highway 257 passes through several miles of sheep and cattle range. Most of the mileage is through sheep range which is grazed from October to April.

The air quality is generally good except for short periods of high wind when fine soil particles are carried by the wind.

All the area is within Visual Resource Management, Class IV.

There are no roads into the state land which is the site of the proposed borrow area and the east end of the proposed dike. The surface has a cover of native vegetation and is slightly sloping to the west. There are no sanitation facilities in the area.

C. ANALYSIS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

1. Proposed Action

a. Environmental Impacts

(1) No significant impacts were identified to wildlife, threatened or endangered animal or plant species, cultural resources, WSA.

(2) Present land uses such as R/W's do not appear to be adversely affected. AT&T responded to our inquiry but did not identify any possible impact.

(3) There is a possibility that several livestock reservoirs around the lake could be adversely affected if lake water was raised high enough to cause the salty water to enter the reservoir. According to the contour maps submitted by the applicant, all reservoirs are above the expected high water line, however some are within a few feet.

(4) The access routes that pass through areas of grazing animals would result in increased vehicle travel. This increases the chance of livestock harrassment, injury or death from vehicle collisions.

(5) Air quality could be reduced by equipment emissions and dust created during construction.

(6) The proposed action would meet the requirements of Class IV VRM.

(7) Some soil surface would be disturbed along the new access route for about one mile of Federal land. This could encourage soil erosion on about 2-1/2 acres. Human waste and trash could accumulate at the camp site.

The impacts of the barrow area is not considered here because it is proposed to be on land controlled by the State of Utah.

This action does not conflict with any present or planned land use plans.

b. Mitigating Measures

(1) The Livestock reservoirs appear to be above high water line, however if any of the reseroirs are threatened by high water, small dikes should be constructed to protect the reservoirs.

(2) Livestock harrassment or injury could be reduced by making sure all drivers are aware of the danger prior to traveling the route and by placing caution signs along the road.

(3) Air quality reduction by dust could be improved by dust control measure. If roads become exceedingly dusty they could be treated with chemical dust retardents or sprinkled with water. The work area could be wet down with water if dust becomes a problem.

(4) Road width should be kept to a minimum but wide enough to be safe. All natural water ways should be prepared to allow water to continue natural flow. Water bars should be placed along the road as needed to control water flow along the road. All side road disturbance should be revegetated as soon as possible where practical. Sanitation facilities must be provided and acceptable trash receptacles be provided and proper disposal of accumulated trash often enough to eliminate any unsightly or unhealthy conditions.

c. Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

(1) Even with cautions there may be some adverse impact on livestock that may be grazing along the road side.

(2) There would be some dust and engine emission put into the air for short periods of time during construction.

(3) There would be a small surface area disturbed with natural vegetation being destroyed which would increase soil erosion along the road.

d. Relationship Between Short-Term Use of the Environment vs Long Term Productivity

The short term use could last indefinitely, however the use should not adversely affect any other reource use significantly.

e. Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

None.

2. Alternatives - No Action

a. Environmental Impacts

No natural environmental impacts would occur. However, there would be an adverse impact to Mr. Godbe as he has spend much time and money in pursuit of a profitable mineral extraction program which is in accordance with present laws.

b. Mitigating Measures

None

c. Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

Same as anticipated impacts.

d. Relationship Between Short-term Use of the Environment vs Long Term Productivity

There would be no short term use or long term production for minerals. Other uses would not be affected to any significant degree.

e. Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

None.

D. RECORD OF PERSONS, GROUPS, AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES CONSULTED

AT&T
Cecil R. Haden
William V. H. Clarke
Mark E. Kuebler
Lee Barton
Doyce L. Coates
Henry Wheeler
Bruce Barton
Millard County Commissioners

E. INTENSITY OF PUBLIC INTEREST

There has not been any demonstrated interest from the local public. The general area is not visited very often by anyone. The greatest exposure to the public is the view from U.S. Highway 50&6 which would not be affected by the proposed action.

F. PARTICIPATING STAFF

See cover.

Team Leader *Gerald R Muhlestein* Date *4-28-86*

Proposed Action: Name, *Sevier Dry Lake Exploration Plan.* Location, *Sevier Dry lake bed*

Description *Plan to develope Potassium from salts of the Sevier lake bed. It includes constructing a 5 mile long dike creating a holding lake. Some road maintainance. See attached information for more details.*

Please identify the significant issues created by the proposed action on your resource, and state why the issue is significant. Initial and date your assessment.

GRM
Minerals: *The [illegible] with [illegible]. All [illegible] the proposed activity and [illegible] their [illegible]. GRM.*

Tom T
Lands: *The only other right shown on the plat that may be affected is a right-of-way in T.20S, R.11W., Sec. 14, 15, 16 shown as a telephone line. I believe these are the AT+T structures. Will they be affected by deeper water caused by the dike? This is the only concern of Lands — TDT 4-30-86*

Don
Livestock: There will [illegible] increased harassment of livestock [illegible] travel [illegible], but not [illegible]. Also [illegible] res[illegible] not [illegible] proposed high water level [illegible] may be in danger of inundation: Crickett #2 10'; Crickett #1 12'; Needle Pt. Horse [illegible] 12'; Morgan 7'; Miller 15'; and Mud Hot, 10'. CF. 5-9-86

GRM
Forestry:
[illegible] forest values. GRM

Camille
Watershed: No impact on watershed resources [illegible] if the [illegible] as proposed. CF [illegible]

GRM
Recreation: *[illegible] US [illegible] [illegible] on two [illegible]. GRM*

John
Wildlife: *Do not [illegible] to be any major impact to T&E [illegible] Travel access has most potential for impact [illegible] identified at present. Mitigation could be [illegible] if negative impact develops from [illegible] travel in specific area, (e.g. [illegible] species raptor nesting). [illegible] 5/8/86*

Level of Analysis and documentation of EAR intensity:

Level of Public Interest:
There does not appear to be any significant impacts. [illegible] a low intensity EA seems sufficient.

Signature of Team Leader *Gerald R Muhlestein*

UT-050-1790-4

CHECKLIST OF REQUIRED ELEMENTS FOR EA

	YES	NO	COMMENTS
1. Proposal in Conformance with MFP/RMP	✓		
2. Floodplains and Wetlands Adversely Affected		✓	CF No impact. CF 5-9-86
3. Water Resources Adversely Affected		✓	CF No impact. CF. 5-9-86
4. Prime and Unique Farmlands Adversely Affected		✓	GRM
5. VRM Classes Adversely Affected		✓	GRM. VRM class III
6. Aquifers Adversely Affected		✓	CF No impact CF 5-9-86
7. Rivers and Harbors 404 Permit Required		✓	
8. Paleontological Resources Adversely Affected		✓	CH
9. T & E (or sensitive) Plants and/or Animals Adversely Affected		✓	CF No T&E plants present! CF 5-16-86
10. Wilderness Values Adversely Affected		✓	GRM Not within or near any WSA
11. Cultural Resources Adversely Affected		✓	CH
12. Air Quality Adversely Affected		✓	GRM
13. Wild and/or Scenic River(s) Adversely Affected		✓	
14. ACEC Involved		✓	
15. T & E Plant Clearance Done		✓	CF CF 5-16-86
16. T & E Animal Clearance Done		✓	bhn. No anticipated impact to T&E. animals 5/9/86
17. Cultural Resource Clearance Done	✓		

I certify that the above elements have been evaluated and the checklist is complete and accurate as shown.

Mark E. Bailey
Area Manager

29 July 86
Date

UT-050-1790-3